Losses of crop yield due to pest attacks

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether country losses approximately 18 per cent of its crop yield valued at Rs. 90,000 crores due to pest attacks each year;

(b) if so, whether use of pesticides help reduce crop losses, provide economic benefits to farmers and reduce soil erosion and ensure food safety and security;

(c) whether Indian pesticide industry with 85,000 MT of production during Fiscal year, 2007 is ranked second in Asia behind China and 12th globally; and

(d) if so, the concrete measures Government is proposing to take to check losses due to pest attacks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) It is estimated that crop losses due to various pests range from 10 – 30% every year depending upon the severity of pest attack.

(b) Use of approved pesticides as per instructions given on label and leaflets helps in reducing crop losses and can provide economic benefit to farmers.

(c) As per information available, the production of pesticides in India during 2007-08 was 79,756 Metric Tonnes (Technical Grade).

(d) Under the Scheme titled "Strengthening and Modernization of Pest management Approach in India" Integrated Pest Management (IPM) has been adopted to check losses due to pest attacks. The Government of India has established 31 Central IPM Centres in 28 States and one Union Territory for pest/disease monitoring, production and release of bio-control agents/bio-pesticides, conservation of bio-control agents and human resource development in IPM by imparting training to agriculture/horticulture extension officers and farmers at grass root level by organizing Farmers Field Schools (FFSs). Under the scheme so far 12,111 FFSs have been organized wherein 50,716 Agriculture/Horticulture Extension Officers and 3,64,617 farmers in different States/Union Territories have been trained. Over 116.7 lakh hectares area has been covered under pest monitoring and 27,906 million bio-control agents in 91.89 lakh hectare area have been released for control of different pests and diseases. Government of India has launched a country wide campaign for ensuring 100% seed treatment for important crops of the country.

IPM package of practices for pest/disease management in 77 major crops have been developed and circulated to all States/UTs and have been posted on website *www.dacnet.nic.in/ppin*. for the use by the extension functionaries and the farmers.